

Oak or Willow

Theme and Level

Themes: Know Myself

Levels: Getting Started, Looking Deeper, Next Steps

At a Glance

Students practice decision-making in a forced choice exercise then analyze their decision-making styles.

Time: 50 minutes.

Essential Questions

- What do I value?
- How do I make choices and decisions?

Preparation

- Set up overhead projector with classroom computer
- Ensure classroom has sufficient open space for activity
- Establish CIS portfolios before this lesson

Steps

1. Show PowerPoint (PPT) Slide 1. Tell students that the goal of this lesson is to become more aware of their values and how they make choices and decisions.
2. Ask students to move to an open area of the room.
3. Explain that you will be giving them a forced choice between two alternatives and that they will indicate their choice by moving to one side of the room or the other.
4. Inform students that they may not stay in the middle; they must choose the side of the room they feel is more like them.
5. As you articulate the choices, point first to one side of the room as you name the first choice, then the other side of the room as you give the second choice.
6. Show PPT Slides 2-6. Introduce the forced choices:
 - Are you more like a shopping bag or a briefcase?
 - Would you rather fix a car or race a car?
 - Would you rather lead or follow?
 - Are you more like an oak or a willow tree?
 - Would you rather play poker or hearts?
7. After students choose sides on a question, ask them to talk to the person next to them about why they made that choice.
8. After a few minutes, stop the discussion and ask a few students on each side of the room to share their reasons.
9. Repeat the five choices above, this time asking students to return to the open area where they started before posing another question and asking them to choose again.
10. Ask students to return to their seats and discuss what they learned about their values and decision-making styles in small groups of four-five.
11. Show PPT Slide 7. Ask for a show of hands regarding the following questions:
 - Who found it easy to quickly make a decision?
 - Who would have liked more information and time?
 - Who wanted to move to be with friends versus listen to their hearts?
12. Some students realize that they need more information before they can decide, while others will be more comfortable deciding impulsively. Students sometimes say they became more aware of how important freedom or structure was to them.
13. Ask students to report discussions to the whole class after seven minutes.

14. Show PPT Slide 8. Discuss with the class how values and decision-making styles evolve as personal growth and development occur.
15. Show PPT Slide 9. Ask students to spend ten minutes writing a paragraph titled "My Values and Decision-Making Style," describing what they learned about their values and decision-making style from this activity.
16. Collect paragraphs from students.

Variations and Accommodations

- Use other choices for younger students (for example, "Would you rather build Lego structures or run in a race?").
- Use one or more of the CIS Occupation Sort attributes as examples of choices one must make.
- Organize an activity that requires students to generate more options or alternatives, increasing the complexity of decision-making (for example, ways to reduce the amount of litter around school, a shopping complex, or a town center; ways to make computers in school more accessible to students; ways to improve the school grounds).
- Offer two solutions to a problem as starter ideas. Divide class into small groups and give each group a piece of chart paper. Tell them to choose one of the solutions or create one of their own. Ask them to list all the reasons they can think of in favor of their solution. Tell students that each group has to sell its solutions to the class. Give groups ten minutes to devise a presentation of no more than two minutes. Groups present their solutions. Ask students to vote individually for the best presentation and the best solution.
- Discuss the effect of marketing and persuasive techniques on our decision-making processes.
- Use the Work Importance Locator assessment so students can experience a way to prioritize one choice over another.
- Work one-on-one with any student needing special assistance.

Assessment

Use the *Oak or Willow Scoring Guide* to evaluate student work.

Portfolio

Students enter their reflections about this activity in the **What do you know about yourself your characteristics, interests and preferences?** text box in the Know Myself section of Career Plan.

Materials

Computer lab with overhead projector and CIS access

[Oak or Willow \(PPTX\)](#)

[Oak or Willow Scoring Guide \(PDF\)](#)

[Oak or Willow Scoring Guide \(DOCX\)](#)

Goals and Standards

Common Core State Standards

- English Language Arts Career Anchor: Speaking & Listening
- English Language Arts Career Anchor: Writing

National Career Development Guidelines

- GOAL PS1 Develop understanding of yourself to build and maintain positive self-concepts.
- GOAL CM2 Use a process of decision-making as one component of career development.

American School Counselor Association

- Career Development, Personal/Social Development

Bloom's Taxonomy: Understanding, Evaluating

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success

Mindset Standards

- Belief in Development of Whole Self, Including a Healthy Balance of Mental, Social/Emotional and Physical Well-Being
- Self-Confidence in Ability to Succeed
- Sense of Belonging in the School Environment
- Positive Attitude Toward Work and Learning

Behavior Standards: Learning Strategies

- Apply Self-Motivation and Self-Direction to Learning
- Gather Evidence and Consider Multiple Perspectives to Make Informed Decisions

Behavior Standards: Self-Management Skills

- Demonstrate Ability to Assume Responsibility
- Demonstrate Self-Discipline and Self-Control
- Demonstrate Ability to Work Independently

Behavior Standards: Social Skills

- Use Effective Oral and Written Communication Skills and Listening Skills
- Create Positive and Supportive Relationships with Other Students
- Demonstrate Empathy
- Use Effective Collaboration and Cooperation Skills
- Use Leadership and Teamwork Skills to Work Effectively in Diverse Teams
- Demonstrate Advocacy Skills and Ability to Assert Self, when Necessary